
Sent: Monday, 11 August 2008 15:05
To: White Paper
Subject: WWW Submission: 6. Personnel/Recruiting & Retention/Defence Families
[SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

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Submission: Current difficulties in recruiting and retaining Defence personnel are likely to persist for the next 10-20 years. Competition from industry and our ageing population require new policies and perceptions. For example, Defence recruiting criteria seem not to have changed to meet new requirements. Consider the case of a mature age applicant seeking an avenue to complete a degree in computer engineering and design who was rejected by the psychological test. A more flexible assessment could have gained for a relevant service a 10-15 year engagement for a graduate who will earn \$150,000+ in private industry on graduation. Apparently such rejections are not at all uncommon. Such applicants are vital to high technology pursuits and there is little doubt they would be unsuitable for combat roles!

Foreign languages and cultural knowledge are useful in deployments such as the Middle East and (say) 'Horn of Africa' countries as examples. Immigrants and refugees are almost impossible to 'clear' in a security sense because background checks do not exist. Post WW2 we experienced a similar lack of verification and other techniques had to be employed. One was the promise of citizenship in a shorter period provided the applicant delivered satisfactory service. This method was particularly successful with certain recruits.

Recruits that successfully undertake high cost and complex training need to be retained in much the same way that private enterprise retains its high quality recruits. The day has come when an SAS soldier has to be paid \$100,000+ in order to keep them. Other specialist skills deserve the same attention; pilots, tank drivers, radar operators. UAV operators-I'm sure there are many others.

Emphasis must be placed on family support services, medical and hospital services and other family needs that have a high dollar value in civilian life.

A program of establishing military establishments in attractive towns serviced by railways, freeways, with good hospital facilities, schools, tertiary colleges, sporting attractions etc in other words all the attractions of living in suburbia but with the natural advantages of living in a country town; are likely to attract and retain recruits with families. As in the US example, Defence must become part of the community and contribute funds and services to enhance the attractiveness of selected towns.

I suggest this would be an attractive alternative for families not necessarily happy with living on the outskirts of large cities.

I agree to my submission being published on the Defence website

I agree to my submission being quoted in the Community Consultation Report